

Wycombe Wanderers 2, Hayes 2

WYCOMBE Wanderers came back from the dead to snatch a 2-2 draw against Hayes in a remarkable finish to Tuesday's Rothmans Isthmian League Division One match at Loakes Park. Trailing 0-2 with 17 minutes remaining, the Blues looked set for their first home league defeat for nearly two seasons.

Then a complete transformation came over the team. Tony Horseman, who had come on as substitute for Dylan Evans, pulled a goal back in the 73rd minute, and then four minutes later Peter Twigg put through his own goal, after a brilliant run from Mick Holfield. So Wycombe were back on level terms.

But that wasn't the end of the action. In the very last minute Holfield, who had much to do with Wanderers' recovery netted, following a goalmouth mêlée. But the cries of the jubilant fans behind Blues' goal were silenced when referee Mr. Peter Wrennall, disallowed the effort for off-side.

So, although they could have won, Wycombe settled for a solitary point, which in itself, had seemed so improbable 20 minutes earlier. At that stage Wycombe looked a beaten side, but they were spurred on by their supporters, who continued their cheerful chants, and can claim some credit for their side's draw.

To be perfectly frank Wycombe played very poorly for the 70 minutes, particularly the defence, which had conceded only nine goals in their previous 11 matches. Skipper Keith Mead and Dave Bullock gave their opponents far too much room, and Hayes took full advantage.

RUSHING OUT

Indeed, if John Maskell had not twice come rushing out of his goal area to clear potentially dangerous situations, Wycombe would certainly have lost. Gary Hand once again turned in a solid unspectacular performance, and is becoming their most reliable defender.

Much of the trouble with Blues' early display, stemmed from mid-field, where the usually reliable Terry Reardon gave an uncharacteristic lethargic performance. Howard Kennedy, too, looked a little cumbersome at times, often wanting too much time.

Holfield hardly touched the ball during the first half, and it was noticeable that the more he came into the game, the better Wycombe fared. His lightning acceleration and close control makes him a potential matchwinner, but he did not get himself involved until the final 20 minutes.

What about Hayes? They came to Loakes Park, with just two wins from 12 games and only three teams below them in the table. Yet they played with great skill and verve and no doubt surprised the Blues, who could well have underestimated them.

Their work rate for the first hour was extremely high, and they probably paid for this in the closing stages. Bobby Ross, the former Brentford mid-field player, tired noticeably towards the end, while their strong defence, on which their side is built, started to panic.

In Roy Butler, Hayes possessed a strong and speedy striker, and he caused a heap of problems to a shaky defence. Together with the strong running Alan Charrington and the lively Twigg, he formed a lively spearhead, which was particularly adept at quick breaks upfield.

This was apparent right from the start for in the first minute, Butler passed dangerously

By MICHAEL KNOX Wycombe Wanderers 2, Hayes 2

across the face of the home goal, with the Wycombe defence at sixes and sevens. Perhaps, I thought, the Blues have not broken out of the lethargy of Saturday's F.A. Cup tie against outclassed Milton Keynes, whom they beat 2-0.

But there were more danger signs, particularly, when Twigg, put through by Pat Hatt, had only Maskell between him and the goal. However the 'keeper came out bravely and kicked the ball to safety.

Wycombe, too, had their moments early on. Steve Perrin headed over following a fine cross by Dylan Evans, while Searle nodded Reardon's free kick just outside a post, and they appeared to be gaining the upper hand, when Hayes struck just a minute before the interval.

Twigg, who picked the ball up on the left hand side of the field, near the half-way line, was given far too much room. He was allowed to run deep into Wycombe territory, before sending over a cross to the far

post. Charrington came racing in and struck a low shot past the stranded Maskell.

MORE VIGOUR

Blues started the second half with a good deal more vigour, and Searle mistimed a close range header, which should have brought the equaliser. However danger also threatened at the other end and Maskell was quick to block a shot from the dangerous Twigg.

This was a warning sign, which Wycombe failed to heed — to their cost. In the 61st minute, Hayes won the ball in mid-field. Butler split the defence, with a pass to Hatt, who had time to place his shot wide of Maskell.

The Blues must have been shocked and dispirited by this goal — but it didn't show. Instead they became more determined, and with the crowd right behind them, they summoned up all their energy, in an attempt to salvage their unbeaten home record.

Searle fired a long range effort just wide, before Horseman lifted Wycombe's hopes with a memorable goal in the 73rd minute. Hand passed to Searle, who in turn slipped the ball through to Horseman. 'Bodger', 15 yards out, let fly and the ball rocketed into the roof of the net.

The roar of the fans must have been heard all over Wycombe. But the noise was nothing compared to the shouts acclaiming the equaliser four minutes later. Holfield, with his sudden change of pace, slipped round the back of the defence and crossed from the bye-line.

Both Searle and Horseman failed to make contact, but the ball struck the unfortunate Twigg and crept over the line out of Graham Cracknell's reach. So Wycombe had levelled matters, and it would have been an injustice to Hayes, had Holfield's effort in the last minute been allowed to stand and had Cracknell not made a fine diving save from Horseman.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell, P. Birdseye, G. Hand, K. Mead, D. Bullock, T. Reardon, K. Searle, H. Kennedy, D. Evans (sub. A. Horseman 56 mins), M. Holfield, S. Perrin.

HAYES: G. Cracknell, S. Palfrey, A. Harris, R. Ross, J. Pearce, D. Tiernan, T. James, (sub. J. O'Sullivan 75 mins), A. Charrington, R. Butler, P. Twigg, P. Hatt.

Referee: Mr. P. C. Wrennall (Burnham).

Half-time: 0-1. **Scorers:** Wycombe: Horseman (73 mins), Twigg o.g. (77); Hayes: Carrington (44), Hatt (61).

ROTHMANS ISTHMIAN LEAGUE

DIVISION 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ilford	13	9	2	2	31	16	29
Enfield	12	9	1	2	18	8	28
L'head	12	8	2	2	31	13	26
Wycombe	12	3	2	2	21	11	24
Sutton	11	7	1	3	18	11	22
Stortford	13	7	1	5	21	15	22
Dagenham	8	7	0	1	20	5	21
Clapton	11	7	0	4	17	18	21
Dulwich	12	6	1	5	19	17	19
Tooting	9	6	0	3	12	11	18
Walthamstow	11	8	2	4	21	17	17
Barking	12	8	0	7	19	15	15
Hendon	15	3	8	8	17	28	15
Slough	12	3	4	5	12	15	13
Woking	11	2	4	5	15	17	10
Hayes	13	4	4	14	25	10	10
Walton	13	3	1	9	14	31	10
K. Storrion	10	3	1	8	6	15	10
L. Tonstone	9	3	0	10	15	8	9
Oxford	9	3	0	6	9	16	9
Hitchin	10	2	6	6	18	22	8
Bromley	12	1	0	11	6	27	3